

June 2003

## Message from the Governor

Everyday, thousands of North Dakota citizens rely on our state employees for essential services. I thank you for your dedication in serving the public and your commitment to providing outstanding service in meeting the needs of our citizens.

We recently concluded the 58<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly. From the start of the Legislative Session, we focused on our key priorities in North Dakota: education, higher paying jobs and taking care of our seniors. We were committed to fiscally responsible government. We cut the rate of growth in government spending in half, to just over 2 percent, about the rate of inflation. In addition, two-thirds of our state agencies will be spending less money in the coming biennium than in the current biennium. We accomplished these things while still providing more services for our citizens.

While we exercised solid fiscal responsibility and concern for our citizens, we put forward and passed initiatives for our number one priority, creating higher paying jobs for North Dakota citizens.

Funding supporting our *Smart Growth* initiatives: Centers of Excellence, New Venture Capital and Seed Funds, an ethanol production incentive program, energy development, corporate tax simplification and increased funding for *ConnectND* will help move us forward in our economic development efforts and creating higher paying jobs.

We also made real progress in school funding, increasing state support by more than \$36 million.

We continued our strong commitment to taking care of people. Funding increased to provide services for long-term care and for people with developmental disabilities. And, we increased funding for home and community based care so that we can meet the needs of our seniors and people with disabilities.

In addition to the solid work we achieved in the regular session, we accomplished important work in the Special Session. We committed funding to teacher compensation, provided resources for Corrections to adequately staff

our prisons, and we made significant changes to determine how more than \$100 million in technology and our state employee workforce will be managed. Legislation now allows for a 1 percent and 2 percent salary increase for state employees through the elimination of unfilled positions and other efficiencies. The bill no longer requires a reduction of 176 state employee jobs, but enables us to use sensible discretion in managing state government.

Again, thank you for your contributions in making North Dakota the best state in the nation to live, work and play.

Best wishes always.



Governor John Hoeven

## President's Corner

Dear Fellow Employees,

It is a great honor to serve as Chairman of the Council of State Employees. Again this year the Board of Directors are planning the State Employee Recognition Week, held the third week in September, which is quickly approaching.

Also, that week the Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service will be given out. Look for information on our web-

page and pass this information along to all state employees.

Our main goals at COSE are:

To improve the morale of the state employees.

To give recognition to all state employees.

To improve employee productivity; and

To monitor employee concerns.

Thanks to all legislators for their continued effort to protect our medical programs. It is a very valuable asset to our benefit package.

But we still need to continue to use wellness principles and judgment.

Enjoy your summer.  
Dave Senne



## Workplace Safety

### *Why is chemical safety so important?*

Employers today are required to train their employees on the use of chemicals. As with other safety training programs some may ask, why is this training necessary? The answer is that the Federal Government mandates these training programs under the "Federal Right to Know Laws".

In the infancy of compound

chemical use, employers would buy hazardous or dangerous chemicals for use in the workplace. Employees would use these chemicals without any instructions on how to protect themselves from the hazards of the product. Many times hazardous chemicals were not properly labeled. Employees would get sick and not know they were suffering the adverse affects of hazardous or improper use of chemicals.

In today's work atmosphere with proper chemical labeling and a MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet), employees have all the information from this document telling them how to properly use a chemical and what to do or who to contact if they suffer an exposure from chemical use. As with other informational sheets, the MSDS

tells the user what type of adverse affects they should watch for and what type of safety equipment to use to protect themselves from the adverse affects of a specific chemical. In this information age all you have to do is ask your employer for the safety information concerning the chemicals in the workplace. The employer is mandated by law to:

1. Provide you this information,
2. Provide the proper safety equipment, and
3. Provide the training on how to safely use the chemicals in your workplace.

So why is it so important?  
It's your health and personal safety.



## Senior Info-Line links people to resources

*"Where can I get help paying for my medications?"*

*"My mother can't live alone at home anymore without supportive services. How can I locate services for her?"*

*"I have a legal question, but can't afford an attorney. Who can I call?"*

The Department of Human Services operates a Senior Information and Assistance Service, called Senior Info-Line that can link seniors, adult children, neighbors, professionals, and others up with information about important services that can help adult seniors and people with disabilities to live independently or meet their changing needs.

This free and confidential service is a phone call away and can also be accessed on-line at [www.ndseniorinfo.com](http://www.ndseniorinfo.com).

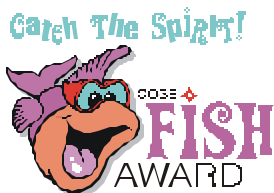
"It's not a crisis-line, but we do go the extra mile, and we are more than a talking phone book," said Linda Wright, Director of the department's Aging Services Division.

The information and assistance service often links people up with in-home services such as personal care services, meal services, legal assistance, senior health insurance counseling, and much more. People can search the Internet database by the type of service, provider name, city, county or state.

Required by the Older Americans Act, the Senior Info-Line can be reached at 1-800-451-8693. The telephone service is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. (CST). During evenings and weekends, a caller can leave a message, which will be responded to on the following business day. The searchable database is accessible 24-hours a day, seven days per week at [www.ndseniorinfo.com](http://www.ndseniorinfo.com).

*"My mother can't live alone at home anymore without supportive services. How can I locate services for her?"*

## Fish Award Nominees



**First quarter nominees:** Mary Glessner, Varsity Mart – NDSU; Floyd Alford, ND School for the Blind; Judy Smith, ND School for the Blind; Tami Iszler, ND School for the Deaf; Tanya Northagen, Housing/UND Staff Senate; Arnold Aronson, ND School for the Deaf; David Senne, UND Facilities; Aquina Beck, West Dining Center-NDSU; Tammie Reger, NDSU; Merri Jo Connole, Minot State Financial Aid-MSU; Kathy Nelson, Minot State Financial Aid-

MSU; Brian Morken, ND School for the Deaf.

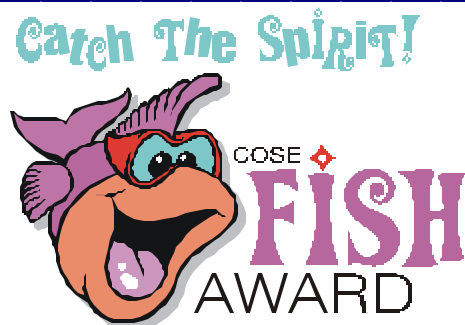
**Second quarter nominees:** Jack Chatt, UND; Cathy Perry, UND; (3) Bridgette Drummer, UND Student Academic Services; Sandy Atkinson, School for the Blind; Linda Jenson, Adjutant General-Devils Lake; Wendy Palmer, NDSU; Blair Johnson, NDSU Microcomputer; Don Carey, NDSU Entomology; Carolyn Beckerleg, NDSU Business; Jody Gullickson, DHS; Shelly Bauske, Public Service Commission; Virginia Rivinius, Central Personnel; Jackie Knowlen, Dickinson Job Service; Lorraine Schank, Dickinson Job Service; Rebecca Rosenkranz,

Protection and Advocacy Project; Julie Schwan, Board of Nursing; Ken Esterby, Williston DOT; Margaret Schmidt, NDSU Resident Life; Robyn Hoffmann, SAO; Mary Feltman, Auditor's Office; Jean Hagen, NDSU Air Force ROTC; Linda Wiedmann, NDSU; Tammy Irion, NDSU Caregiver; and Tania Skinner, NDSU Independent Study.

Congratulations to Mary Glessner (1st quarter winner) and Sandy Atkinson (2nd quarter winner). Mary and Sandy will each receive a COSE t-shirt.

## Fish Awards

**F**riendly  
**I**nitiative  
**S**mile  
**H**elpful



Developed by the State COSE Board of Directors, the Fish Award:

- ❖ Symbolizes excellence in customer service,
- ❖ Recognizes employees who promote customer service in state government,
- ❖ Acknowledges employees who model excellence in customer service to other fellow State Employees,
- ❖ Exemplifies the standard "We all have a customer; we all provide service to others," and
- ❖ Recognizes employees who understand that "Providing customer service is part of our job."

For more information on this award, or to nominate someone, contact your COSE representative. All nominations must be received by June 30, 2003 to be eligible for the this quarters award. Nomination forms can be found on the web at [www.state.nd.us/cose/](http://www.state.nd.us/cose/) or from your COSE representative.

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